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Traffic Education for Montana Schools

A Reference Manual
for the Organization & Administration
of Montana's Traffic Education Programs

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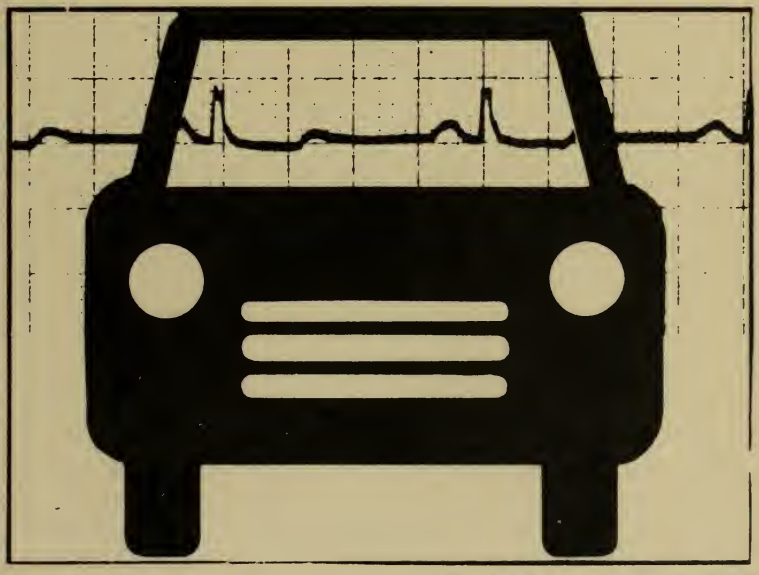

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Office of Public Instruction
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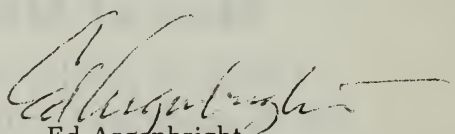
Introduction

This manual has been prepared to assist all persons who have responsibilities for traffic education programming in Montana.

The purposes of the manual are:

1. to provide an official reference for school officials and others concerned with traffic education;
2. to provide an overall view of all standards and procedures for the organization and administration of traffic education in Montana schools; and
3. to promote better understanding of traffic education programming and facilitate a quality program statewide.

This manual is designed to provide the answers you seek to questions about traffic education in one self-contained booklet. However, should you need additional assistance or wish to make suggestions or comments, you may contact my Traffic Education Specialist via mail or call toll free 1-800-332-3402.



Ed Argenbright
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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I. Program Requirements

A. The Program*

An approved traffic education program for student drivers must:

1. be provided only by school districts operating a junior high school or high school.
2. be for students who are 15 years old or older, or who will reach their 15th birthday within six months of course completion.
3. be taught by a teacher(s) of traffic education approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
4. be based on a curriculum guide, or guides, readily available for perusal from the Superintendent of Public Instruction or traffic education staff. A student must meet the minimum performance objectives identified by the local school district in order to be considered as having successfully completed the program.
5. be scheduled so that a sufficient number of courses are provided to allow every eligible youth within the school jurisdiction an opportunity to enroll.
6. consist of at least 60 hours of structured learning experiences scheduled over no less than 20 days. These learning experiences must include at least six hours of behind-the-wheel in-traffic driving instruction. Twelve hours of simulation may be substituted for two hours of behind-the-wheel instruction for those schools having traffic simulator equipment.
7. provide behind-the-wheel instruction only to students who are currently participating in classroom instruction. All program phases must be conducted concurrently.
8. use only dual-control vehicles that are equipped according to standards established by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
9. have property and liability insurance sufficient to protect the school, teachers, students, the public, the vehicle(s), and its owner.
10. use the form entitled "School/Dealer Vehicle Use Agreement" or its equivalent when a traffic education loan vehicle is procured from a vehicle dealer.

* Schools wishing to depart from any of the above requirements must submit a clear and complete explanation to the Traffic Education Specialist, Office of Public Instruction, along with the school district application forms. Approval of a departure request must be granted before the program begins.

B. The Teacher

All teachers of traffic education must have:

1. a valid Montana teaching certificate.
2. approval as a teacher of traffic education issued by the Superintendent of Public Instruction with each renewal of the teacher's teaching certificate.
3. a minimum of 12 quarter hours of credit course work in traffic safety education. This 12-hour block must include a basic and advanced traffic education course. For each succeeding renewal of the teacher's teaching certificate, after initial approval, the teacher must accumulate six quarter hours of credit course work in traffic safety education, until such time as an endorsable minor, or its equivalent (30 credits), has been completed.
4. a valid Montana Driver License.
5. a driving record, local, state, and national, free from repeated collision experiences and traffic law violations within the previous two years.

C. The Vehicle

Vehicles used for the behind-the-wheel driving phase of traffic education may be procured through a loan, lease, or purchase arrangement. Regardless of the method, it is essential that a sufficient number of vehicles be available for instructional use. Each traffic education vehicle must be equipped, maintained, repaired, identified, insured, stored, and used according to the following:

1. *Required Equipment*
   a. Dual-control brake
   b. All Federal Safety Standard Equipment
   c. Two exterior mirrors and/or an instructor's rearview mirror
   d. First aid kit
   e. Flares or reflector warning devices
   f. Fire extinguisher located in the passenger compartment
   g. Accident report forms
2. *Recommended Equipment*
   a. Power steering and power brakes
   b. Split or bucket type front seat
   c. Four door sedan
   d. Air conditioning
   e. Tow cable
   f. Shovel, ax and bucket
   g. Flashlight
   h. Rear window defogger
   i. Ignition cut-off switch
3. *Maintenance*
   Maintenance and repair practices should be in conformance with manufacturer's recommendations and with the policy established by the school district and participating dealer.

4. *Vehicle Identification*
   All vehicles used in the traffic education program are to be identified by either an overhead sign, a rear sign, or both. When the rear sign is used, it must not be so large as to obstruct a driver's rear vision. Decals provided by the dealers are used only in conjunction with one or both types of signs.
5. *Restriction of Loan Vehicles*
   Vehicles provided by dealers on a loan basis shall be used for ***traffic education purposes only*** unless the dealer(s) give written authorization to use the vehicles for other purposes.
6. *Licensing*
   "Exempt" license plates shall be obtained for a traffic education vehicle. "Dealer" license plates are not to be used on these vehicles. Responsibility for securing an "exempt" license rests with the school district. The school must obtain the appropriate application from their county treasurer. In the space provided for **Registered Owner**, type the name and phone number of the school district, and the name of the dealer providing the vehicle.
7. *Insurance*
   Each practice driving vehicle (including motorcycles) must be covered by an amount of insurance that meets or exceeds minimum requirements of local and state financial responsibility statutes.
8. *Vehicle Use Agreements*
   The most common method for procuring practice-driving vehicles is a school/dealer use agreement between the school or school district and a cooperative automobile dealer or dealer group. Each school district must use the form entitled "School/Dealer Vehicle Use Agreement," or its equivalent. This agreement form is self-explanatory and can be obtained by writing to the Traffic Education Specialist, Office of Public Instruction, Helena 59620.

   If several dealers express a desire to provide practice-driving vehicles on a loan basis, the school district should either accept an equal number of vehicles from each dealer or should apply an annual rotation plan worked out with the dealer group or the local vehicle dealers association.
9. *Vehicles Rented, Leased or Owned by School*
   Vehicles assigned for use in the traffic education program must be readily available for this use. Use of vehicles for other purposes must not conflict with the traffic education instructional program.

D. Student Enrollment and Learner License(s)

The trustees of any district operating a junior high school or high school may establish and maintain a traffic education course for pupils enrolled in the secondary schools in the districts or county high schools, ***provided that any students enrolled in the course will have reached their 15th birthday within six months of course completion.***

All students enrolled in the traffic education program are required to have in their immediate possession a valid Montana Traffic Education Permit, a valid Montana Traffic Education Learner License, a valid Montana Instruction Permit or a valid Montana Driver License.

1. *Traffic Education Permit*
   This permit is valid from the date of issue until course completion as indicated by the expiration date, provided that the student is accompanied by an approved traffic education instructor. These permits are issued to the school district upon approval of the program by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
2. *Traffic Education Learner License*
   Montana's Traffic Education Learner License allows a student to legally practice drive with a licensed parent or guardian as well as a traffic education instructor. It does not allow the student to practice drive with any licensed driver, only a licensed parent, guardian, or qualified teacher of traffic education. This license can only be obtained while the student is successfully participating in, or has successfully completed, a state approved traffic education program. It is valid for six months from the date of purchase of receipt.

   This license is issued directly by the Montana Highway Patrol Division providing:
   a. the respective school district personnel authorizes the student to apply for the license by placing his/her name on the **gold** form entitled "Traffic Education Notice of Successful Participation" and transmits the original and duplicate to the county treasurer.
   b. the student has gone to the county courthouse, paid the necessary fee and obtained the Driver License Receipt and application form.
   c. the student presents the completed notarized application and receipts with proof of identity, date of birth, and Social Security number to the examiner.
   d. the student is at least fourteen and one-half years of age.
   e. the student is ***successfully participating in or has successfully completed*** a state-approved traffic education program.
   f. the student successfully completes all parts of the driver license examination other than the driving test.

II. Program Procedures

A. Application Procedures

1. A school district must apply for and receive approval from the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the district's traffic education program for student drivers ***before*** the program begins, or the school district will ***not*** be eligible for state reimbursement.
2. To obtain approval for a traffic education program a school district must complete and submit the application form entitled, "School District Application for Approval of a Traffic Education Program(s) for Student Drivers." This application form can be obtained from the Superintendent of Public Instruction's Traffic Education Specialist. Following action by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, one copy of the application will be returned to the school district showing the approval status. All necessary forms and materials will be forwarded at this time.
3. The traffic education teacher(s) teaching the program must have approval issued by the Superintendent ***on or before*** the beginning date of the program or the school district will ***not*** be eligible for state reimbursement.

B. Reimbursement Procedures

1. The administrative official of the school district or county high school is responsible for submitting the appropriate form entitled "Traffic Education Program Reimbursement Request" which serves as a certified list of pupils who have completed a state-approved traffic education program. This list is the official request for reimbursement and must be submitted on or before July 10 for all students that completed the program during the preceding fiscal year.
2. Reimbursement per student is based on course completion and minimum age requirements. **Reimbursement per student is paid whether the student passed or failed the course.**
3. On or before August 31 of each year, the Superintendent of Public Instruction will disburse to the school districts and county high schools the amount of traffic education reimbursement money to which they are entitled based on the number of students listed on the reimbursement forms and on the money available for reimbursement in the state Traffic Education Account.

C. Driver Examination Procedures (See Appendix B for more information.)

1. Students completing a traffic education course should be advised of the requirement for presenting a birth certificate, Social Security number and notarized application form to the licensing official at the time they appear for examination.
2. Before students 15 years of age can obtain a driver license, the administrative official of the school district or county high school must verify successful completion of a state-approved traffic education program to the county treasurer and/or licensing official.

   The following procedures serve as a basis for permitting 15 year old students to secure an operator's license:

   a. Prepare three copies of the **green** form entitled "Traffic Education Notice of Successful Course Completion." **(This is the only form the licensing official is allowed to accept.)**
   b. Transmit the original and duplicate to the county treasurer of the county in which the program is operated, or give directly to the licensing official.
   c. Keep the triplicate. **Do not transmit this form to the Office of Public Instruction.** This form may be submitted periodically throughout the year as students under the age of 16 complete the traffic education program. Additional copies of this form are available from the Traffic Education Specialist, Office of Public Instruction, Helena, MT 59620.

Appendix A

Listing of Forms Used in Traffic Education

Below is a list of traffic education program forms. Copies of these forms are available on request from the Office of Public Instruction, Traffic Education Specialist, Helena, MT 59620.

1. School District Application for Approval of a Traffic Education Program(s) for Student Drivers
2. School/Dealer Vehicle Use Agreement
3. Traffic Education Program Reimbursement Request
4. Traffic Education Notice of Successful Participation
5. Traffic Education Notice of Successful Course Completion
6. School District Traffic Education Program Survey
7. Application for Approval as a Teacher of Traffic Education

Appendix B

Procedure for Obtaining a Driver's License in Montana

1. Pay the driver's license fee to a county treasurer or appropriate licensing official.
   a. You will receive two receipts and an application form. (Receipts entitle you to three attempts to pass the examination within six months.)

2. Fill out your application form and study the driver's manual. Be sure to have both parents' signatures and signature of a notary public.

3. Present the completed application and receipts to the Driver Examiner when you are prepared for the examination.
   a. New applicants will be required to present to the examiner satisfactory proof of identity and date of birth at the time of the first examination. (A birth certificate is the best possible proof.)
   b. Students are to bring their Social Security number to the exam station. This number will become the driver's license number. Students who do not have a Social Security card should be advised to apply for one prior to driver licensing. If a student does not have a Social Security number or objects to the use of it as a driver's license number, the examiner will assign a number.
   c. The examination will consist of:
      (1) a written test of your knowledge of traffic laws and safe driving practices;
      (2) a test of your knowledge and understanding of road signs; and
      (3) a vision test.
   d. In the event you pass all three of these tests, you will be given an opportunity to take the road test. If you are not ready to take this test, it may be postponed, and an Instruction Permit obtained, which authorizes you to practice your driving while accompanied by a licensed operator or chauffeur for up to six months from date of purchase of receipts.
   e. If the Instruction Permit expires before the entire test is completed, the applicant will be required to pay the fee and start over again.

Appendix C

Montana's Traffic Education Law

Part 5

20-7-501. Definitions. As used in this title, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise the following definitions apply:

(1) "Traffic education" means instruction in the motor vehicle laws, in the acceptance of personal responsibility on the public highways, in the causes and consequences of traffic accidents, and in the skills necessary for the safe operation of motor vehicles.

(2) "Traffic education course" means a course of traffic education which has been approved by the superintendent of public instruction.

(3) "Teacher of traffic education" means an instructor approved by the superintendent of public instruction to teach traffic education.

(4) "Traffic education account" means the state treasury account in the earmarked revenue fund for the deposit and disbursement of state traffic education revenue.

History: En. 75-7901 by Sec. 435, Ch. 5, L. 1971; R.C.M. 1947, 75-7901.

20-7-502. Duties of superintendent of public instruction. The superintendent of public instruction shall:

(1) develop, administer, and supervise the program of instruction in traffic education;

(2) establish basic course requirements in classroom instruction and behind-the-wheel instruction for traffic education;

(3) establish the classroom instruction qualifications for a teacher of traffic education;

(4) approve teachers of traffic education when such teachers are qualified;

(5) establish criteria for traffic education course approval based on the basic course requirements, teacher of traffic education qualifications, and the requirements of law;

(6) approve traffic education courses when such courses meet the criteria for approval;

(7) promulgate a policy for the distribution of the traffic education moneys to approved traffic education courses and annually order the distribution of the proceeds of the traffic education account in the manner required by law; and

(8) assist districts with the conduct of traffic education.

History: En. 75-7904 by Sec. 438, Ch. 5, L. 1971; R.C.M. 1947, 75-7904.

20-7-503. District establishment of traffic education program. The trustees of any district operating a junior high school or high school may establish and maintain a traffic education course. The traffic education course shall be:

(1) for students who are 15 years old or older or will have reached their 15th birthday within 6 months of the course completion;

(2) taught by a teacher of traffic education;

(3) conducted in accordance with the basic course requirements established by the superintendent of public instruction; and

(4) taught during regular school hours, after regular school hours, on Saturdays, or as a summer school course, at the option of the trustees.

History: En. 75-7905 by Sec. 439, Ch. 5, L. 1971; R.C.M. 1947, 75-7905.

20-7-504. State traffic education account—proceeds earmarked for the account. (1) There is a traffic education account in the treasury of the state of Montana. There shall be paid into this account a portion of the fines and forfeitures collected in any court from persons apprehended or arrested by highway patrol officers or department of highways peace officers for any violation of chapter 3, part 1 of chapter 4, or chapters 5 through 10 of Title 61, relating to the operation or use of motor vehicles, in the following amounts:

(a) if a fine is imposed, 25 percent of the fine imposed;

(b) if multiple offenses are involved, 25 percent of the total sum of all fines imposed;

(c) if a fine is suspended, in whole or in part, 25 percent of the fine actually paid; and

(d) if any deposit of bail is made for an offense to which this section applies and the bail is forfeited, 25 percent of the forfeited bail.

(2) 35 percent of all money received by the state from the collection of the motor vehicle driver's license fee provided for under the laws of Montana shall be contributed to the traffic education account.

History: En. 75-7902 by Sec. 436, Ch. 5, L. 1971; R.C.M. 1947, 75-7902; amd. Sec. 96, Ch. 421, L. 1979.

20-7-505. Transmittal of proceeds from fines and other sources. (1) The portion of the proceeds from fines and bail forfeitures which are to be deposited in the traffic education account shall be transmitted to the county treasurer by the court collecting them, in the manner and at the times that fines and bail forfeitures are transmitted to the county treasurer. The court shall indicate what portion of each fine is to be credited to the traffic education account. The county treasurer shall transmit monthly to the state treasurer, without deduction, the portions of the fines received which are to be credited to the traffic education account.

(2) When a court is required to transmit fees, fines, and forfeitures directly to the state treasurer, the gross proceeds including the portion of the fines to be credited to the traffic education account shall be transmitted to the state treasurer and the appropriate portion shall be deposited in the traffic education account.

History: En. 75-7903 by Sec. 437, Ch. 5, L. 1971; R.C.M. 1947, 75-7903.

20-7-506. Annual allocation and distribution of traffic education account proceeds—allocation for state administration. (1) The superintendent of public instruction shall annually order the distribution of all moneys in the traffic education account to the district conducting approved traffic education courses. The distribution of the traffic education moneys shall be based on the distribution policy promulgated by the superintendent of public instruction, provided that the reimbursements to districts shall be based upon the number of pupils who, in a given school fiscal year, complete an approved traffic education course, including both the classroom instruction and behind-the-wheel driving.

(2) Before such fund is disbursed, there shall be deducted an amount necessary to provide for the state administration of the traffic education program by the superintendent of public instruction. Such state administration may include:

(a) development, printing, and distribution of essential materials;

(b) preparation of teachers of traffic education;

(c) state supervision of the program; and

(d) any and all other activities deemed necessary by the superintendent of public instruction.

History: En. 75-7906 b Sec. 440, Ch. 5, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 307, L. 1973; R.C.M. 1947, 75-7906.

20-7-507. District traffic education fund. The trustees of any district maintaining a traffic education course shall establish a special nonbudgeted fund with the county treasurer for traffic education. The state traffic education reimbursement and all nontax receipts for traffic education shall be deposited in the district's traffic education fund. The expenditure of the moneys deposited in the district's traffic education fund shall not be subject to the budgeting provisions of this title and the moneys may be expended for traffic education.

History: En. 75-7907 by Sec. 441, Ch. 5, L. 1971, R.C.M. 1947, 75-7907.

Appendix D

Considerations for Scheduling Your Traffic Education Program

Quality traffic education programs are characterized by several accepted principles of scheduling. Today, most traffic education programs are faced with financial limitations, time restrictions, and the chains of traditionalism. The following principles are offered as scheduling guides:

1. The classroom instruction and behind-the-wheel instruction should be offered on a concurrent basis and integrated and correlated together.
2. Inclement weather driving is encouraged as opposed to cutting back or cancelling driving until the arrival of fairer weather.
3. Schedule two students per vehicle, per hour; three and four persons may reduce instructional effectiveness and waste time during driver changes. Never schedule only one student.
4. School policy should govern which students are accepted into the program first, second, and so on. You may want to consider age (oldest first), need (students must financially assist family), grades, or "first come, first serve" during sign up times.
5. Traffic education instruction should be provided for in the regular school day, as well as after school, and in the summer, if your student enrollment justifies it. This will help assure that all eligible students have an opportunity to enroll.

Appendix E

Perceptual/Physical Testing

Driving decisions and performance to a large extent depend on a clear, complete and accurate picture of the immediate surroundings. Ninety percent of a driver's decisions are based on perception. Perceptual/physical testing should be a part of a well-rounded traffic education program because it gives the student and instructor an insight into individual capabilities and how to compensate for any deficiencies.

Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to observe and recognize, in an efficient manner, the pertinent highway transportation system events and conditions for vehicle guidance along selected routes.

The following is a list of various perceptual/physical testing that you may want to include:

1. visual acuity
2. distance judgment
3. color recognition
4. night vision
5. glare vision and glare recovery
6. central vision
7. peripheral vision
8. reaction time.

This testing can be accomplished with appropriate testing equipment. The instructor can have students operate these tests or divide the students into groups of two and have them test each other.

Appendix F

Parent Participation

Parental assistance can serve, not to replace the traffic education program, but to supplement the driving portion of the course. Parents should allow students to drive while taking the school course and after its completion.

The parental role is one of reinforcing skills introduced by the traffic education instruction; new skills should not be introduced by the parent. The important objective of traffic education, both formal and informal, is the development of an effective, efficient, and responsible highway user.

1. *Guidelines and Sequence*

   Before the practice sessions, a good system of communication and method of instruction should be established so that each person knows what to expect of the other. To aid in parent-student-teacher communication, a check-off plan can be used by both instructor and parent so that each is aware of what the other is doing.

   Before driving, the student should become familiar with the operation of all controls and safety devices since these differ from vehicle to vehicle. Also, the vehicle owner's manual should be studied in advance.

   At the beginning of the practice session, the student should start the vehicle, move it forward a short distance, and then stop a few times to adjust to the particular vehicle.

   Easy left and right turns on level streets can be practiced first, followed by various kinds of turning situations. Good timing and coordination especially during the "unwinding" phase, should be emphasized. Lateral judgment can be developed by pulling parallel along a curb to within six inches.

2. *Stress Visual Habits*

   To insure good perceptive driving, stress visual habits behind the wheel. If the eyes keep moving throughout the entire 360 degrees of the driving environment, the driver can make the correct responses to clues and hazards, vital to proper vehicle operation.

   Steering control, lane position, and speed control can be taught by using lightly traveled rural roads; good visual habits are essential to the development of all three skills. Allow practice time for adjusting speed control to road and traffic conditions, vehicle limitations, and driver proficiency.

   Gradually, as the student becomes proficient in the manipulative skills and visual habits, you can progress into traffic, cross thru streets, turn onto and off them, and then travel on them. Be aware of the traffic situations ahead of the student and give cues when necessary. Occasionally, have the student verbalize what is seen ahead.

If a hazardous situation should develop which the student is not prepared to handle, then it is best to pull over to the side and wait for the situation to clear up.

3. *Keep Sessions Short*

A few short practice sessions (30 to 45 minutes) are generally more effective than one or two longer sessions. After considerable practice, a long drive on the highway may suitably demonstrate the effects of fatigue and tension at the wheel.

Beginning drivers usually need to take more time to see and evaluate what they see. They should not feel embarrassed because of their need for extra caution or because of an experienced driver's lack of patience or understanding. **Most new drivers should spend a minimum of 25 to 30 hours in supervised practice behind the wheel before they are granted the privilege to obtain a driver license.**

The student driver will function and learn best under conditions where mutual respect abounds. The responsibility of the parent is fulfilled by giving proper guidance and setting good examples. Combined with formal high school traffic education, supplemental practice offers a sound contribution to the development of the skilled, safe driver.

Remember, get parents involved! Inform parents about what you want the student to learn. Use a booklet created as a guideline for parents or a brief instruction sheet with the procedure sheets included. Outline specific tasks, such as backing, that you want the student to practice with parents. Have a meeting with the parents of students who need additional practice, individually or as a group. The easiest communication, but not always the most effective, is the telephone. Inform the parent what and how you want the student taught. Issuance of a learner license to all students should be carefully considered before practice is initiated. You might consider issuance of the learner license only after the student has passed the halfway point in your traffic education program. Of course, it is your decision if and when to use this method to extend your program. We encourage you to try it. You might like it.

To obtain further information, guidelines and sample materials about parent participation, contact the Traffic Education Specialist, Office of Public Instruction, Helena, MT 59620.

Appendix G

A Discussion of Traffic Education for Montana Schools

I. Introduction

Traffic education programs exist as a component of two complex systems, Montana's educational system and Montana's highway transportation system. Each system has its own set of goals, objectives, procedures and evaluation processes. Within Montana's educational system, traffic education competes for attention with an array of school subjects in regard to schedule, time and financial support. School decision-making officials should judge the potential of traffic education, along with other school areas, based on relevance of the area to the general objectives of the education system and the unique objectives which apply to the local school district. Acceptance as a priority curricular offering depends upon the degree to which this specialty area contributes to the general objectives of education and the degree to which the course meets special needs of the local community.

As a part of Montana's highway transportation system, traffic education competes with diverse groups of components. The general objective of management forces within the highway transportation system is to provide safe, efficient, convenient, comfortable, economical and rapid movement of people and goods. Therefore, in order to substantiate its worth, traffic education must produce safe and efficient highway users who are capable of (1) coping successfully with a variety of physical environments; (2) operating efficiently on complex traffic facilities; (3) controlling the vehicles they operate; (4) blending with other highway users; and (5) supporting worthwhile approaches to system improvement.

Although the nature of Montana's education system differs from the highway transportation system, traffic education must operate as a component of both systems. Decisions regarding policies and practices related to traffic education should be based on the goals, objectives, procedures and evaluation processes which are designed to enhance the collision prevention value of traffic education.

II. Local Responsibility

The leadership of the local school authorities, and particularly of the school district superintendent, is of paramount importance in a successful traffic education program. It is recommended that the responsibility for the overall school traffic education program be assigned to a qualified and interested individual.

Evaluating the effectiveness of the overall traffic education program is an indispensable means of improving instruction. School staffs should work cooperatively in developing and applying an evaluation plan designed to reveal needs or new directions for improving traffic education.

The evaluation plan should be an integral part of planning for and continuing instruction. School officials should work closely with teachers to:

1. prepare and arrange in logical order a series of clearly worded objectives that describe expected performances.
2. develop instructional modules or units which contain learning activities.
3. produce suitable measurement or procedures for determining whether an individual or group has achieved the objectives.

III. Planning for Instruction

This section provides guidelines to assist the school district in planning, implementing and evaluating its traffic education program.

A. *Course Scheduling*

The various phases of instruction (classroom and behind-the-wheel) should be integrated and correlated through appropriate assignment of students. Students should not be scheduled for dual-control vehicle instruction until they have acquired certain basic knowledge in the classroom phase and have experienced skill development exercises with simulation equipment, on a multiple-vehicle driving facility and/or an off-street driving area.

There are several different systems used in scheduling classes for traffic education. Each administrator will need to apply sound judgment in selecting a system which will allow inclusion of traffic education in the curriculum of the school.

The following considerations should be taken into account:

1. the number of students and how they are to be accommodated;
2. the number of weeks needed to complete the course;
3. the amount of time to be allocated to classroom instruction and behind-the-wheel instruction phases;
4. the number of qualified teachers available;
5. the availability of dual-control vehicles.

During the regular school year each traffic education program should be scheduled for a full semester. Traffic education programs should be included in the regular school curriculum whenever possible. Classes may be taught after regular school hours or on Saturdays as well as on regular school days or as a summer school program. High schools may cooperate in the presentation of a traffic education program.

1. *Classroom Instruction*

In the classroom, student experiences focus on the personal and social factors affecting the safe and efficient movement of traffic. The theory of motor vehicle operation is explored and understanding is developed of the desirable roles to be played by all users of traffic facilities including drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists. In planning for effective classroom instruction, approaches should be selected that will

achieve goals through developing basic knowledge, desirable attitudinal or behavioral traits, and the fundamental knowledge needed to develop skills for efficient operation of motor vehicles. Classroom experiences in traffic education courses may be improved through the proper use of audiovisual teaching aids, multi-media arrangements, and television.

2. *Behind-the-Wheel Instruction*

The objectives developed for the behind-the-wheel instruction phase should parallel and supplement classroom instruction. Students may apply and reinforce the knowledge and behavioral tendencies gained in the classroom as well as acquire skills and establish desirable habit patterns.

Student experiences may include a combination of the following:

a. behind-the-wheel experiences in a dual-control vehicle, operated under on-street conditions with the supervision of a teacher seated in the front seat to the right of the student.
b. in-traffic observation experience in a dual-control vehicle.
c. simulated experience consisting of filmed traffic events which provide students with opportunities to respond with realistic driving controls under the close supervision of a teacher.
d. behind-the-wheel experience in a practice driving vehicle which is operated on an off-street multiple vehicle driving facility.

3. *Minimum Time*

The need for recognition and support from within Montana's educational system and from within the transportation system demands increasing accountability for results of instruction. Since experience has not demonstrated that time-based instruction offers reasonable or acceptable assurance of student accomplishment, many traffic education programs are moving toward criterion-referenced or performance-based instruction. This means that for each aspect of the total traffic education program careful study must be made to determine the desired terminal performance levels of students and the alternate methods through which the terminal performances may be attained. Until such time as minimum performance-based standards are determined, it is recommended that the minimum schedule for student achievement of course objectives be 60 hours of structured learning experiences.

In a competency oriented program, the amount of time needed by a group or an individual student for learning a unit, concept or topic could vary.

Students need experience in both classroom and behind-the-wheel instruction. Stress should be placed on student achievement of high level performance objectives instead of time based exposure to specific units of instruction.

B. *Types of Courses*

1. *Dual-Control Vehicle Plan*

The dual-control vehicle plan consists of classroom instruction plus actual on-street driving experience and observation time in a dual-control vehicle. There is a ratio of one teacher to one student behind-the-wheel, with up to three more students as in-vehicle observers. Within each group, students rotate from observation to behind-the-wheel instruction. Most of the practice driving activity takes place on streets and highways accessible to the school site, using existing traffic conditions as the learning environment.

Experience indicates that the low teacher-pupil ratio in a dual-control vehicle provides students with an amount and type of individual attention that meets their needs. Teachers are able to vary the method of instruction and the length of instruction in order to bring all students up to a satisfactory performance level. Another positive conclusion is that student observers learn quickly from both the mistakes and the accomplishments of the student behind-the-wheel. On the negative side, the low teacher-pupil ratio results in a relatively high cost of instruction per student per unit of instructional time. Another weakness is the failure to provide teachers with a means of determining either the student's potential ability or performance level gained through previous experience in advance of scheduling for in-vehicle instruction. Also, this plan offers no safe, practical, and effective method of developing in students habituated responses to collision-producing emergency situations. In addition, the practice driving activity is limited to streets and highways accessible to the school site. In rural Montana, this may represent minimal exposure to the varieties of traffic conditions and situations a youngster will be exposed to in his driving career.

Experience leads to the conclusion that better results are obtained when student experiences in the classroom and behind-the-wheel phases are closely correlated. One method of accomplishing this is to have teachers rotate assignments between the two phases, using course content and teaching strategies derived from careful planning by the entire instructional staff.

2. *Simulator Plan*

The simulator plan calls for regular classroom instruction, simulated practice driving experiences using approved electronic equipment, and behind-the-wheel learning in a dual-control vehicle operated in traffic. The simulation equipment is located either in a classroom or in a mobile unit which can be moved from one location to another.

Research studies have demonstrated that use of simulation equipment as a part of traffic education produces students who are at least as adequately prepared as are students who have taken the dual-control vehicle type of course. The simulation

medium permits teachers to assess the readiness of students before they are scheduled for on-street practice. Simulation experience can improve the student's ability to identify and predict what other road users may do, make sound decisions and carry out the decisions effectively. It offers them experience with a wider range of traffic situations than would be possible in many parts of Montana. Not only is the scope of instruction expanded but the order of exposure to more complex learning situations may be arranged progressively with the students' acquisition of advanced skills. The simulation plan gives the students practice, without undue risk, in recognizing common emergency situations and selecting the most appropriate response. The opportunity to learn proper responses to collision-producing situations should be an integral part of all traffic education courses. It has also been shown that the simulator plan can prepare students at a lower per pupil cost when the equipment is used on a full-time basis, and student enrollment is adequate.

A weakness is that mastery of manipulative skills in a simulator does not necessarily assure comparable performance in the dual-control vehicle. In addition, simulation does not lend itself to learning in regard to all driving skills. Examples are skid control and parallel parking.

3. *Multiple Vehicle Driving Plan*

This plan consists of the regular classroom instruction, behind-the-wheel learning in a dual-control vehicle operated in traffic, and a varying amount of time on an off-street multiple vehicle driving facility.

A unique benefit of this plan is the greater opportunities students have to practice basic maneuvers. The increased opportunity arises not only from the extended time available, but from the design of the facility which requires most of the time to be spent maneuvering a car and very little time devoted to steering it down a straight roadway. Such a facility should consist of a hard-surfaced area on which a number of student-operated vehicles are used simultaneously under the direct supervision of one or more teachers. The area should include space for development of fundamental driving skills and decision-making processes, road surfaces wide enough for two-way and multiple lane traffic lanes, and an electronic or otherwise effective means of communication between teachers and students. In addition, the driving facility experience requires students to rely on their own learning rather than depending on a "patient" teacher, ready to remind them of all the necessary driving acts or to use the dual controls. Students often come better prepared for the scheduled learning sessions, form sound decision-making habits, and develop self-reliance, confidence, and performance ability at a faster rate. The multiple vehicle plan also permits teachers to evaluate the level of motor skills achieved by students in order to provide special attention to individual needs and to tell when students are ready to drive in

actual traffic conditions. With appropriate space and design features, this facility can provide students with an opportunity to practice certain emergency maneuvers of an evasive nature.

The advantages cited are concerned with quality of instruction, but the per student cost advantage for this type of laboratory instruction must not be overlooked. In dual-control vehicle instruction the teacher-pupil ratio is one to one; on the multiple vehicle facility, one teacher can work effectively with 12 or more students.

4. *Multiple Phase Approach*

The multiple phase approach provides perhaps the best possible framework for achieving the central purpose of traffic education in that it combines the advantages of the dual-control vehicle plan, the simulator plan, and the multiple vehicle plan, and may add a multi-media package. Scheduled for 90 hours, a multiple plan course may provide each student with up to 45 hours in the regular classroom, 15 hours of multi-media, 12 hours of simulator instruction, 6 hours of multiple vehicle instruction, and as much as three hours of dual-control vehicle instruction. This approach enables each student to have observation experience in traffic and time for scheduled project activities. There is also time for the use of television and other innovative approaches as they become available.

The principle disadvantage of the multiple phase approach is the sizable investment required for the initial procurement of equipment and facilities. However, when the useful life of the equipment and facilities and the improved teacher-pupil ratio are taken into account, per student costs of the multiple phase approach are at least comparable to those of the dual-control vehicle plan.

C. *Course Content*

Content of traffic education courses for student drivers should treat, but not be limited to, the following areas of study:

1. basic and advanced driving maneuvers;
2. perceptual and decision-making techniques;
3. the effects of drugs, including alcohol, and other substances on the driving performance;
4. rules of the road, state traffic laws, and local ordinances;
5. signs, signals, highway markings, and highway design innovations which require understanding for efficient driving performance;
6. operation of motor vehicles on streets and highways with emphasis on techniques that will aid the driver and passenger in the event of a collision, and facilitate the transportation and care of injured persons.
7. special characteristics of urban, rural, and freeway driving;
8. information on the capabilities and limitations of other highway users, such as pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists and operators of commercial vehicles;
9. special techniques for coping with emergency situations and environmental factors such as wind, rain, flooding, heat, ice and snow;

10. preventive maintenance, with emphasis on motor vehicle systems and subsystems, which are critical to safe operation;
11. first aid and natural laws relating to the driving task;
12. comprehensive highway safety programs, like law enforcement, and how they are developed and improved;
13. career awareness;
14. consumer education;
15. energy conservation as it relates to the driving task and the ecological impact of transportation.

D. *Evaluation and Reporting*

In order to provide a basis for program improvement in traffic education, school officials responsible for the program should conduct ongoing evaluations to determine the effectiveness of courses provided by its high school(s). As a part of the plan, every effort should be made to collect and assess the graduates' driving records.

The evaluation plan should include school and district recording of the name, birth date, and course completion date of each student completing the program, and the per pupil cost for that instruction.

A simple cost-effectiveness comparison can be made for a given type of traffic education course in one school with that of other schools in the district or county of the state.

High schools should have available for reporting purposes the following information:

1. A description of the traffic education course offered, including documentation of departures from established minimum State Superintendent of Public Instruction standards required for course approval.
2. A roster of traffic education teachers and administrators along with their location of assignment and their qualifications and certification status.
3. Accurate description of physical facilities and equipment made available at each school for traffic education including complete information pertaining to practice driving vehicles.

A record of students who have successfully completed each type of traffic education course should be maintained for five or more years for possible research purposes. Effectiveness of programs over the time period should be determined.

E. *Parent Participation*

Time available for behind-the-wheel instruction is often limited to the extent that some students do not attain the desirable skill level. In some instances, the concerned students do not receive a passing grade and, in other cases, additional practice under supervision is provided after completion of the course. Parents are not usually aware of the course content or methodology employed by traffic education instructors. As a result, the parent is unable to apply adequate standards when supervising supplementary in-vehicle driving practice.

Various procedures have been evolved to remedy this deficiency. Some school systems have prepared special forms which are mailed to parents or are delivered by students. These forms identify driving weaknesses and ask the parent to provide the student with additional

practice under supervision. However, this procedure has proved to be a somewhat negligible solution to the problem. Other school systems have developed a special "parent participation curriculum guide" with supplemental lesson plans. The teacher interprets the course and explains the role of parents in providing students with additional practice while the school traffic education course is being conducted. In general, the results have been encouraging. Often, with parents concentrating on the development of fundamental manipulative skills, teachers have more time (in-vehicle) to devote to advanced elements of the driving task.

F. *Resources*

Wise use of resource people, films, tape recordings, filmstrips, etc., is most valuable. Unwise use, without planned educational purpose, however, is a waste of time. Seldom should a film, tape, resource person, filmstrip, etc., be expected to carry the full burden of an educational program. The teacher ceases to fulfill the role as leader and director of the education activities of the classroom when outside aids, whether they be human or mechanical, are not tightly woven into a planned educational program which continually moves along to accomplish its designed purpose.

1. *Resource Personnel*

When a resource person is used, the appearance should be well planned. A list of questions should be drawn up ahead of time by the students. The guest speaker should be supplied with a list of these questions ahead of time. Some suggested resource people are:

a. car dealer
b. doctor
c. finance person
d. Highway Patrol officer
e. insurance agent
f. judge
g. lawyer
h. local police
i. mechanic
j. traffic engineer

Where class periods are long (50-60 minutes), do not expect your guest to speak the entire time. Use of a film or demonstration can help to increase interest and produce a better discussion.

2. *Field Trips*

Field trips can present first-hand experience not possible in the classroom. A trip must be well planned. Students should be involved and have some objective to accomplish. Each student or group of students should have some assignment. Notify any person or business well in advance of your visit.

Possible trips are:

a. car dealership
b. emergency driving procedures workshop
c. driver licensing station
d. garage

e. highway department
f. large city
g. traffic court
h. service station

3. *Films and Filmstrips*

These resources should be ordered on a yearly or semester basis. Teachers should consider the advantages of making their own slides and movies. This allows for better organization, and the instructor can emphasize those things he feels important.

Sources:

a. private industry
b. National School Safety film catalog(s)
c. Montana AV Film Library
d. public service organizations

G. *Community Relations*

Traffic education is an area of the total school offering that is constantly in the public eye. Parents, of course, have a concern for their children's safety in traffic; sharing this concern are many governmental officials and community agencies. For this reason public information media are always eager to present traffic topics. It thus behooves teachers and school administrators to do everything possible to see that the traffic education course is of top quality that truly reflects the total school program.

Good community and media relations in connection with traffic education enable the school to achieve public backing not only for the course but for the entire school program. After everything administratively possible is done to assure that the best instruction can take place, then students, parents, traffic police, license personnel, representatives from civic clubs, governmental agencies, community leaders, and news media people are brought in to help improve the program. School-community cooperative endeavors should take place. For example, an off-street multiple vehicle driving facility can become a focal point of activity during non-school hours. Methods of continuously interpreting the program to the public and its leaders include the following:

1. examples of good teaching and safe driving practices exhibited on streets and highways as well as in classrooms and on special facilities.
2. providing the news media with regular and special news items.
3. inservice work with the entire faculty.
4. proper care and exclusive use of practice driving vehicles for instructional purposes.
5. recognition by each teacher that, because he is known throughout the community, he must set a good example for driving behavior.
6. acceptance by teachers and administrators of every opportunity to appear before civic groups to tell of both accomplishments and the needs of traffic education.
7. open house and parent/teacher conferences.

H. *Safety Belts and Protection*

Safety belts are "preventive medicine." Their major functions are as follows:

1. They prevent ejection from the car in case of crash. (There is five times the risk of death if one is thrown from the car.)
2. They lessen injury inside the car.
3. They restrain and decelerate the body with the vehicle, thus minimizing injury.
4. They hold the body in the seat during sudden stops and turns, giving the driver better control over the car.
5. They prevent fatigue by preventing slouch and muscular activity which otherwise would be needed to keep the body in the seat as the car bounces or turns.

Make safety belts a habit.

I. *Night Time Instruction*

Darkness is the most common and, perhaps, least regarded visual handicap. Classroom discussion, films and other approaches should be used to make the student aware of the problems of night driving. Where possible, school districts are encouraged to provide vehicle instruction during hours of darkness. This provides students with supervised vehicle operating experience under conditions that are less than ideal—a very real part of everyday driving.

J. *Other Traffic Education Courses*

Traffic education courses should be provided within school districts for beginning adult drivers, meeting special needs of individuals and groups (such as the handicapped), driver improvement, vocational purposes, motorcycle safety, snowmobile safety, recreational vehicle safety and advanced driving. Such courses should:

1. be based on current curriculum guide(s) approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
2. provide behind-the-wheel instruction only to students who are currently participating in the classroom phase of the program;
3. use only practice driving vehicles that are equipped according to standards established by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and are covered by insurance sufficient to protect the school, teachers, students, and the public;
4. use only specifically qualified traffic education teachers.

K. Motorcycle Safety Education

An appropriate amount of traffic education course time should be devoted to the relationship between automobiles and motorcycles. This instruction should bring out the fact that many traffic collisions involving automobiles and motorcycles occur because one or both operators are not aware of the special characteristics of the contrasting vehicles.

It is further recommended that schools offer a beginning motorcycle safety course on an elective basis for those intending to ride motorcycles.